

# LONG ISLAND FORUM



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## TABLE of CONTENTS

LOSS OF WHALSHIP RICHMOND

BIRTH OF A TOWN DUMP

SOME EARLY LONG ISLAND PRODUCTS

ISLAND'S PART IN WORLD AVIATION, PART X

FAMOUS SUMMER HOTELS

"CATBOATING" FIFTY YEARS AGO

LETTERS FROM FORUM READERS

Walter L. Earle, Curator  
Cold Spring Harbor Whaling Museum

Dr. Clarence Ashton Wood

Kate W. Strong

Preston R. Bassett

John Tooker

John Good

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## THE LONG ISLAND FORUM

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FOR LONG ISLANDERS EVERYWHERE

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**PAUL BAILEY, Publisher-Editor**

*Contributing Editors*

Clarence A. Wood, LL.M., Ph.D.

Malcolm M. Willey, Ph.D.

John C. Huden, Ph.D.

**JULY, 1950**

**Famous Summer Hotels**

John Tooker, Babylon

Many old Long Islanders regret the passing of an era in the history of Long Island which I would like to call "The Era of The Summer Hotel," when almost every village had at least one summer hotel in addition to those open all the year. That era began before this writer was born, and he has lived to see its close, and the summer hotel, thanks (?) to the automobile, to become as extinct as the dodo.

Those hotels contributed much to the social life of the country villages, and substantial sums to the business men and mechanics. What the rocking-chair manufacturers made out of them is any one's guess for every hotel veranda was lined with old-fashioned rockers. Stylish carriages with high-stepping teams were continually moving about the streets adding to a liveliness that was missing in winter.

Time and space will permit us to name only a few of the summer hotels, mostly along the south shore. The first was the rambling structure known as the Long Beach Hotel where my partner of the past forty-four years handled the telephone exchange in the seasons of 1905-6. I will leave it to some reader with a flair for mathematics to compute the number of rocking-chairs needed to line its one thousand and one hundred-foot-long veranda which faced the broad Atlantic.

The Argyle at Babylon, named after a famous Duke, was beautifully situated on the west side of the lake which bears its name, but which was called Blythbourne before the hotel was built. The Hotel Brooklyn at Center Moriches was more familiar to me because an uncle used to have charge of the mechanical equipment, and two others often gave me a ride there when delivering supplies.

I was still more familiar with the Manhasset House on Shelter Island for I was often sent over from Greenport in the 1890's to help repair the machinery. Once I was

Continued on page 130

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# Loss of Whaleship Richmond

## Editor's Note

As curator of the Whaling Museum at Cold Spring Harbor, Mr. Earle here tells of the disaster which befell the whaling ship Richmond of that Long Island port about a century ago. As will be noted, reference numbers are used, with a list of sources at the end of the article.

**T**HERE were three whales named "Richmond".

The first was a small ship (291) tons, of New Bedford. She was very active, making 12 completed cruises during the 16 years from July 1816 to August 1832. On her 13th cruise tragedy and disaster overtook her. She sailed from New Bedford on May 27, 1835, and 4 years later she was wrecked, with the loss of 2 mates and 9 seamen. She was condemned and her oil was sold at the Bay of Islands, in the Pacific, in August 1839. (1)

Then came the "Richmond" of Cold Spring, also a ship, but a large one, 437 tons. (2) She appears to have been purchased by Messrs. John H. Jones and Walter R. Jones, and others of their associates of the Cold Spring Whaling Company, in the latter part of 1843. They built no vessels and there is no record of any being built for them. The only reference made by Starbuck on the appearance of the ship "Richmond", of Cold Spring, is that she was "Added in 1843" — meaning added to the Cold Spring fleet.

We do not now know when and where the "Richmond", of Cold Spring, was built, nor her history prior to her appearance at Cold Spring. The probabilities are, however, that she had been built for whaling and had been operated for some years, under another name. By that time three-masted ships, fully square-rigged, were being replaced by barks. The latter,

*By Walter K. Earle*

*Curator, Cold Spring Harbor  
Whaling Museum*

with three masts but with its mizzen mast schooner rigged, had proved itself the best type for whaling—more efficient and economical than the ship. Many small types of merchant vessels — brigs, schooners and even large sloops—were used for whaling. But to convert and use a



Capt. Jonas Winters of Rescuing Barque

ship would have been extravagant and uneconomical.

To build a vessel of 437 tons would have cost, in 1843, upwards of \$28,000. (3) Vessel values were firm in those days, and even if not new the "Richmond" was sound, and rigged and outfitted she probably cost the Messrs. Jones and associates \$25,000. Whether new or not in 1843, she was then named "Richmond"; and we have not found any record of any cruise of any ship of that name and size prior to December 1843.

The third "Richmond" was

a bark, of Providence, R. I. Starbuck records a voyage by her out of Providence in 1841, and several thereafter.

Considering the then recent disaster to the New Bedford "Richmond" and the superstitions of sea-faring men, it is surprising that at least one and perhaps two whalers were given the name of that unfortunate ship. It is also curious that in the careful historical chronology of Starbuck and the compilation published by the Old Dartmouth Historical Society, of New Bedford, in 1938, (4) no reference is made to the origin or earlier history of such a large vessel as the "Richmond", of Cold Spring. Hereafter in using the name we will refer only to her.

The "Richmond" made but one complete cruise from Cold Spring—sailing on December 2, 1843 and returning March 13, 1846, under Captain Ludlow. Starbuck records that she brought home 3,800 barrels of "whale" oil and 13,843 pounds of "bone". That was about her full capacity for oil, which had to be stowed in casks. It was a good "catch", the better because the cruise of 2 years and 3 months was comparatively short and saving of expense. "Whale" oil and "bone" meant that the catch was not sperm but the non-toothed whales, principally right whales and bowheads, in the cold waters off the "Northwest Coast" of North America. Although we do not now know what the owners realized, the current prices at New Bedford give some indication of value. Figuring from prices of \$11 per barrel for "whale" oil and 34 cents per pound for "bone" (Spears), the gross value of this catch, alongside ship, was not far off \$45,000.

From this point we have an extraordinary record of facts

as set forth in an opinion of the U. S. Supreme Court, (5) with additions from Starbuck.

On July 21, 1846, four months after her return from the first cruise, the "Richmond" again sailed from Cold Spring, "on a whaling voyage to the North and South Pacific oceans."—Capt. Winters, master. Three years later, on August 2, 1849, she was wrecked on the rocks in Behring's Straits, in the Arctic.

She had done well until then. She had sent home 99 barrels of sperm oil, 430 barrels of whale oil and 3,500 pounds of bone; and when wrecked she had on board 3,500 barrels, nearly her capacity, of oil (Starbuck) and a large quantity of bone. A few days more and she would have been set for home.

The Supreme Court opinion gives the following picture:

"The Richmond, after a ramble of three years on the Pacific, in pursuit of whales, had passed through the sea of Anadin, and was nearing Behring's Straits, in the Arctic ocean, on the 2nd of August, 1849. She had nearly completed her cargo, and was about to return; but during a thick fog, she was run upon rocks, within half a mile of the shore, and in a situation from which it was impossible to extricate her. The master and crew escaped in their boats to the shore, holding communication with the vessel, without much difficulty or labor.

They could probably have transported the cargo to the beach, but this would have been unprofitable labor as its condition would not have been improved. Though saved from the ocean, it would not have been safe. The coast was barren; the few inhabitants, savages and thieves. This ocean is navigable for only two months in the year; during the remainder of the year it is sealed up with ice.

The winter was expected to commence within fifteen or twenty days, at farthest. The nearest port of safety and general commercial intercourse was at the Sandwich Islands, five thousand miles distant. (6) Their only hope of escape from this inhospitable region was by means of other whaling

vessels which were known to be cruising at no great distance, and who had been in company with the Richmond, and had pursued the same course.

On the 5th of August the fog cleared off, and the ship Elizabeth Frith was seen at a short distance."

The next day, August 6, the

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ships "Panama" and "Junior" arrived on the scene. Between them they took aboard the officers and crew of the "Richmond", and in due course returned home. Capt. Winters of the "Richmond" died on the way home, aboard the "Frith". By a strange coincidence he was a brother of the master of the "Frith", also Capt. Winters.

The "Frith" and the "Panama" were both from Sag Harbor. They arrived there on May 13, and March 25, 1850, respectively. The "Junior" was a New Bedford vessel. She returned there on

cargo in the few days of the season in which it would be safe to remain, was very uncertain, and barely probable. The whales were retreating towards the north pole, where they could not be pursued, and, though seen in numbers on one day, they would disappear on the next; and, even when seen in great numbers, their capture was uncertain. By this transaction, the vessels were enabled to proceed at once on their home voyage:  
\* \* \*

All four of the masters

count was kept and no bill of sale made out.

But the owners of the "Richmond" were not satisfied with the "sale"; and they were alert. When the "Frith" and "Panama" returned to Sag Harbor their owners offered the oil and bone for sale. Thereupon Messrs. Jones and associates stepped in with the lawsuit against the owners of the two vessels, by libels against the cargoes. They conceded that the salvors were entitled to fair salvage and freight, but no more. The Supreme Court held with them, and sent the case back to the lower court to determine the amounts to be allowed for salvage and freight.

We do not now have further facts. The Cold Spring owners lost their valuable ship and all her tackle, and a substantial part of the fruits of her cruise; and they were out of pocket to the extent of the cost of outfitting and maintenance except as balanced off from the proceeds of the oil and bone sent home earlier. It must have been a severe blow, financially.

As the case was presented, upon such unusual facts and circumstances and under some rather ancient rules of admiralty law, the Supreme Court said, in closing: "We think the claimants (the owners of the 'Frith' and 'Panama') have acted in good faith in making their defense."

(1) Alexander Starbuck — "The History of the American Whaling Fishery. From its Earliest Inception to the Year 1876."—1978.

(2) The late Clifford W. Ashley, in his notable work "The Yankee Whaler", wrote that there were very few whalers of more than 425 tons.

(3) "The Story of the New England Whaler"—Spears.

(4) "Whaling Masters"—It records 10,000 whaling cruises—vessels and masters.

(5) Wm. E. Post and others, appellants v. John H. Jones and others, respondents, 19 Howard 150—1856.

(6) And 27,000 miles from Cold Spring—8 months or more of sailing for a slow and heavy vessel, around the Horn.

(7) Starbuck.



From Drawing by Ambrose Louis Garneray, 1783-1857

March 15, 1850. (7) She was not joined in the lawsuit.

The masters of the three rescuing ships were not content to save the men of the "Richmond". They also thought of themselves at that particular time and place. The season in the Arctic was over; if they could fill up from the "Richmond" they could set for home; otherwise they would be faced with a further long extended period hunting in warmer waters. So they each filled up from the "Richmond", each taking some 700 or 800 barrels of oil and large quantities of bone.

As the Court observed:

"Whales may have been plenty around their vessels on the 6th and 7th of August, but judging of the future from the past, the anticipation of filling their

knew, of course, that salving vessels would be entitled to salvage, a percentage of the value of the cargo saved. But the master of the "Junior" had a brighter idea. He "said he would take part of the oil 'provided it was put up and sold at auction'". So that is what they did. Notices of sale at auction were posted on each of the three ships, and they went through the forms of an auction—with three bidders, each bidding for a limited amount from a supply far in excess of their aggregate capacities. The master of the "Frith" was successful on his bid of \$1 per barrel; the masters of the other two were more fortunate, filling their capacities on bids of 75 cents per barrel. The ship and all her tackle were knocked down to the lucky bidder for \$5. No money was paid, no ac-

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## Forum

Continued From Page 126

sent over to act as fireman for Mr. Havens, the engineer, when the chef sent out a large pie to us. All he got back was the empty tin.

All the hotels so far mentioned, and many more, are pictured in a booklet issued by the Long Island Railroad in 1898. In the one showing the Manhasset House the ferryboat Menantic that often carried me across Little Neck Bay, can be seen standing in the slip, and I can also see part of the hydraulic apparatus used to raise and lower the ferry bridge, which I helped to install in 1894. The original piping may have rusted out long ago but the same system is still in use.

We must not forget the Clark House at Greenport, or Betsey Clark, its proprietor in the 90s. While that hotel can hardly be classed as a summer hotel it did have an increased patronage in the summer months. Most vacationists, however, went over to Shelter Island. The Clark House was built when a clear view of the bay and Shelter Island could be had from its veranda, but that view was shut off many years ago by blocks of business buildings. All that now remains of the hotel is a small portion used to house the village police. The voice of old Charles, the colored driver of the Clark House stage, is no longer heard at the depot calling out something that sounded like "Clawk! Clawk!"

In the first week of August 1907 the old Long Beach Hotel went up in flames, the employees and 1100 guests escaping safely, and the following week, on August 13th., The Hotel Brooklyn at Center Moriches was completely destroyed by fire with no casualties. The Manhasset House eventually met the same fate.

The Forum would welcome additions to the above list of famous old time summer hotels of Long Island.

\* \* \*

"Cathoating" 50 Years Ago

Have just finished reading Jul-

Continued on page 134

## Reminders

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## Birth of a Town Dump

A QUARTER of a century ago the disposal of rubbish was a problem at Southold. The town fathers had not yet provided a town dump. Trash somehow found its way to depressions along roadways.

W. D. Faulkner a wealthy man married one of Southold village's daughters and located in the former residence of her father, Lawyer Albertson Case. The newcomer was a public spirited man of leisure and thought something should be done about an unsightly hole on Main Street in front of their home.

It was in 1924 that some of his neighbors found it convenient to deposit therein things of no further use to them. Finally Mr. Faulkner felt the necessity of sending this message to them through the columns of the Southold village weekly, the theme of which was "Too much is plenty."

"I want to thank the town-folks for filling in this winter the unsightly hole on Main Street. But from now on please discontinue dumping tin cans etc. Too much is plenty. If you have an extra load of good top soil you have no use for, and should you happen to pass that way, I'll promise to close my eyes while you deposit it.

"I remain yours for green grass always, W. D. Faulkner."

Three years later Mr. Faulkner bought of "Uncle" Louis A. Tuthill a chunk of land on Mechanic Street near the latter's green house. This land incidentally was a part of the "whomme lott" which was assigned in pristine days to Rev. John Youngs, the first pastor of the town.

Mechanic Street was so named because there was once a carriage shop on one side and a blacksmith shop opposite. Now both shops are

*By Dr. Clarence A. Wood*

wedded on the west side of the street. Spencer W. Petty, Sr., the owner shoes no horses nor makes carriages. He has the old forge by means of which he makes clam rakes and repairs the farmers' machinery.

Part of Mechanic Street extends from the business center of modern Southold village to a marshy hollow up and into which Town Creek backs in time of extraordinarily high tide. There is a spur or off-shoot, parallel with Main Street, extending from the above part of Mechanic Street to Youngs Avenue which avenue memorializes the Youngs of yore.

This came about because the original Mechanic Street was laid out in the form of a right angle with the shops at the apex. Present day Mechanic Street is like the letter

T. The leg of the T should have a name of its own. It should be called Prince Street for historical reasons. However, this story has nothing to do with the spur or link between that part of Mechanic Street leading to the marsh and Youngs Avenue.

Again through the village newspaper Mr. Faulkner extended "An Invitation" to his neighbors. It read: "The Public is invited to DUMP RUBBISH on my lot situated at the foot of Mechanic Street, Southold. Please do not deposit garbage, gold, auto bodies or chassis, newspapers, furniture, mattresses, limbs of trees, wooden boxes, barrels, diamonds, rags or clothing of any kind. Try to keep within the boundary lines and throw your materials on the low land. Please bear in mind the fact that it is not my intention to invite disease, but



SOUTHOLD TOWN'S VERDANT ACRES

to extend to you the privilege of disposing of your rubbish.

"Yours for clean highways, W. D. Faulkner."

Notwithstanding Mr. Faulkner's admonition against dumping inflammable material, one day in 1927 a fire started on the dump which he had generously provided for the convenience of the public.

As an aftermath Mr. Faulkner sent the following humorous little note to the Traveler: "Dear Editor—The Public accepted my invitation and there was a great response. Many people visited 'Rubbish Park' last Friday noon, and with them came the Fire Department, to quench the flames.

"I am happy to state that everything has been reduced to ashes, and there is still room for new stuff.

"Through your paper may I ask the Public not to place the goods displayed on the upper bank, but to use the lower level.

"I remain, inviting a fresh supply.

"Yours for rubbish, W.D.F."

Into the following year Mr. Faulkner entertained the villagers for some time with a series of humorous posters which set forth the merits of Rubbish Park. He drew attention to the dump by conducting a cross-word puzzle contest, even offering prizes.

One person not fortunate enough to win one of the proffered prizes referred in the village newspaper to well-to-do Mr. Faulkner as the "rubbish man."

Until recently residents of the town westward of Greenport, when driving there to shop or for entertainment, often detoured that they might contribute their bit to the corporate dump of the metropolis of the North Fork. The trustees of the old whale port, like Mr. Faulkner of Southold earlier, also declared at length "Too much is plenty."

Woe betide any person today who is guilty of depositing stones, trash, ashes or dirt on a public highway in the

town of Southold. There is a law providing a substantial penalty for so doing. An offi-

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logy and archaeology, there are separate chapters on each of the towns in Nassau and Suffolk Counties, the history of the leading church denominations, whaling, fishing, shell fisheries, agriculture, medicine, banking, education, aviation and many other subjects.

Long Island Birdlife is compiled by Edwin Way Teale, nationally known authority; the island's mammals, by Dr. W. J. Hamilton, Cornell zoologist. The most extensive coverage of the island's Indians ever printed was prepared by John H. Morice. Among the authors represented are J. Russel Sprague, Dr. Oscar G. Darlington, Dr. Clarence Ashton Wood, Miss Jacqueline Overton, Rev. John K. Sharp, Chester R. Blakelock, Osborn Shaw, Herbert F. Ricard, Preston R. Bassett, Robert R. Coles, Halsey B. Knapp, Nancy Boyd Willey, Mary E. Bell—in all more than forty such authorities.

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## Some Early Long Island Products

**C**ARRIAGES, known as "chairs", Newtown Pippins (apples), Huntington clay and sassafras wood were among the desired products of Long Island before the Revolution, I learn from some old letters.

In 1752 Henry Lloyd 2d wrote to Henry Lloyd 1st of Lloyd's Neck, Huntington town, asking the latter to buy him a Long Island "chair". The latter responded that he would let him have his own except that his wife would not part with it as it was an "easie one and but little expence," the license being only \$2 on such two-wheel vehicles. As for acquiring a new one, "the hole knott of Chaise Makers are so little to be depended on". However, he would do his best and advised his son that "a plain chair with crest only is most genteel."

I had not known that the common sassafras tree of Long Island produced wood for furniture until I read in a letter from Samuel Finch to the proprietor of Lloyd's Neck that "if brother Joseph can send me by Conklin the first time he comes, Sassafras Wood enough for bedstead with four posts 7½ or 8 foot high, shall esteem it a favor."

In an inventory of the goods of Col. Melancon Taylor Woolsey of Long Island, taken December 14, 1758, I found that among the 11 horses listed was one called Tom Morgan which, I suppose, came from the famous Vermont line of Morgans as it was valued at 12 pounds, while an old bay horse named Absalom was priced at only 10 shillings.

About this time, Henry Lloyd wrote to his father in Boston as follows: "Sir: My last two (letters) were by Capt. Gyles" (Charles, of the sloop Betsy) "and Capt. Paterson, to which I refer you. In both I forgot to mention I

*By Kate W. Strong*

had the offer of a Strong healthy negro Fellow, about 25 years old, brought up in a ship-carpenters yard as a sawyer & boarer of holes, sometimes employed at the smiths business, said to be a dilligent hardworking Fellow, has the Character of being good natured." It seems that the reason such a desirable slave could be purchased for only 50 pounds sterling was that he would "go out nights!"

When James Weed of Canaan, Ct., received an order from the Army for five carts in which to carry corn, they were to be exactly like a cart which Mr. Lloyd had brought from Long Island. Among many stipulations were that the axles must be of walnut and that the sides made of one board 21½ feet wide. The builder was to supply all material and receive from five to six pounds per cart.

In 1788 Henry Lloyd II wrote his father from London that the workday on English farms was from six to six, and the pay one shilling nine pence with overtime in proportion. Men were supplied with "small beer" but must provide their own mid-day meal, usually of bread and cheese.

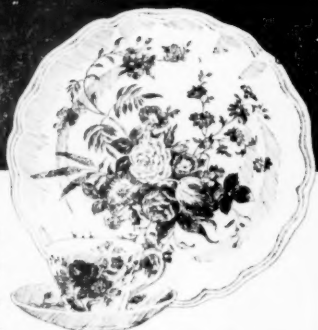
Young Lloyd wished his father to send him some Long Island Indian meal and also some clay from Lloyd's Neck, as he considered it as fine for making dishes as any in England. He also ordered a barrel of Newtown Pippins. Later, however, he wrote his son that these things were unfortunately included in the captain's manifest instead of in his stores "so now they are in the Custom House and cannot be gotten out without paying twice their value."

Maybe the British authorities were wise to thus keep Long Island products from their local markets.

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## Forum

Continued From Page 130

ian Smith's "The Meadow Island Monument" in the June Forum. It was most interesting and reminded me of some craying Morgan La Montagne (now of Baltimore) and I did every summer from 1899 to 1907. We'd leave Lawrence Beach (Nassau County) in a small catboat with a summer cabin and, of course, no motor, and sail eastward, always passing Meadow Island. All I remember was the old Prospect Gun Club and some white buildings further east.

Unless conditions were right, we'd have many a stay-over both coming and going. Head tides, no wind or a very heavy sea from the inlet would do it. Once we had to stay overnight at the old Short Beach Life Saving Station. At another time returning we crossed the inlet on a strong ebb tide and landed on the eastern end of Point Lookout. As we could not buck the tide we "walked" the catboat to the backside of the Point.

As we came in sight of the steamer dock we saw a sand-schooner up against the beach and a small crowd standing around. She was the Sarah Anna Carpenter and we learned that the night before, a member of the crew had killed one Carman Smith whose body was now lying on the beach above high-water with the coroner and other officials in charge. Because of the ship's position, we could not work our way by and had to await change of tide.

Smith, a local character who liked his "likker", had borrowed a boat of Decker Smith, a highly respected citizen, and gone on a sort of maritime spree. When during the night he had tried to force his way into the sand schooner's cabin, a crewman had "crowned" him with a belaying pin, with fatal results.

In those days on the backside of Point Lookout, the sand stood at least 10 feet above highwater, with a hard sloping beach that permitted the sand-schooners to lay to while the sand was taken aboard in wheelbarrows over gangplanks, supported by wooden horses.

Speaking of Point Lookout, when I was a very small boy we spent one summer at nearby Long Beach, occupying the most easterly cottage. A railroad ran from the east side of the old hotel to Point Lookout, stopping near the Life Saving Station and not far from Ellison's Hotel at

Continued on next page

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## Forum

Continued from page 134

the Point. I made many a trip on this little train. I recall that the Life Savers had a large flat-car generally hooked on to the rear of the train which brought their supplies.

They also had a mast, held by stays, and a large sail rigged to it which, with a good northerly or southerly wind, would take the flat-car along the tracks by itself. Certainly Point Lookout as well as Long Beach has come a good ways since those days of fifty years ago.

John Good, Garden City

\* \* \*

### Saxton (Sexton), Post, Powell

Information requested on parents of **GERSHAM SAXTON**—1770-1854, m. (1) Phebe Post, (2) Nancy Powell, Bethpage and Brooklyn. Have descendants.

Parents and children of **GERSHAM SAXTON**—Will 1794, Huntington, Long Island. Wife, Sara—no children mentioned.

Parents and children of **JOSEPH SAXTON**, Freeholder, Islip, L. I., 1720.

Parents and children of **JOSEPH SAXTON**, m. Elizabeth Skidmore, January 6, 1741, Rec. First Church, Huntington—he of Islip, she of Huntington, L. I.

Parents and children of **JAMES SAXTON**, Freeholder, Islip, L. I., 1720.

Parents and children of **THOMAS SAXTON**, brother of William and Ann Stringham, son of Daniel.

Parents and children of **JAMES SAXTON**, brother of William and Ann Stringham, son of Daniel and Sara Bancroft.

Leonard Sullivan,  
149 Broadway,  
New York 6.

\* \* \*

### "America Begins"

A book that should appeal to all who are interested in the background of our country is "America Begins", by Richard M. Dorson and published by Pantheon Books, 333 Fifth Avenue, New York 14. Price \$4.50.

As the name suggests, the book deals with the earlier colonial years and consists of true stories of adventure, descriptions of persons who helped found the country, accounts of voyages of exploration, of the flora and fauna of Indian life.

Mr. Dorson edits rather than  
Continued on next page

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## Long Island Forum Index

Index of Long Island Forum, years 1928-47 inclusive. About 40 pages compiled by Miss Marguerite V. Duggett, Librarian L. I. Collection, Queens Borough Public Library, Jamaica 2, N. Y. Done by photo offset process. \$1 postpaid. Order from Miss Duggett.

## Forum

Continued from page 135

authors the work, as much of the text was written by the early historians among whom are John Smith, Jasper Danckaerts, John Winthrop, Cotton Mather, Captain John Underhill and many others.

In the words of Howard Mumford Jones, the book is "fresh, amusing and illuminating." There is, however, enough basic material included to give it value as a source of ready reference in many fields. It belongs on the factual bookshelf.

\* \* \*

**Mrs. Benjamin Pierson?**

My family genealogy comes through the Pierson, Marsh, Clark and Baker lines:

Henry Pierson, 1618-1680, of South Hampton.

Richard Clark, 1632-1697, also of South Hampton.

Thomas Baker, 1618-1700, of East Hampton.

I am wondering if you have in your files any record of the family name of Benjamin Pierson's wife, the third child of the Henry Pierson above noted, from a deed made by Benjamin Pierson and his wife, Hannah, transferring property left him by his father, Henry Pierson, in which his wife, Hannah, joined.

My search has been unable to disclose what family Hannah Pierson, the wife of Benjamin Pierson, came from. I am wondering if your records might disclose this information. Otherwise, my records of the Pierson Line from Henry to the present are complete.

Arthur N. Pierson,  
Westfield, N. J.

Information should be sent direct to Mr. Pierson, whose above address is complete.—Editor.

\* \* \*

**A Useful Publication**

A pamphlet entitled "Long Island,"  
Continued on page 137

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# Island's Part in World Aviation

## PART X

PRESTON R. BASSETT

*President, Nassau County Historical Society*

The story of Long Island aviation cannot be closed without adding a brief section on the local airplane manufacturing activities. During the recent years of World War II, the aviation manufacturers have brought as much fame and honor to Long Island as did the flyers of the previous decades.

The building of airplanes on Long Island has been continuous since the earliest days when the inventors designed and constructed their own airplanes in the local hangars. The first substantial project, however, was the construction in 1918 of the Curtiss Engineering Laboratories in Garden City. Glen Curtiss himself moved from Buffalo to Garden City to head it up. Curtiss was much more interested in airplane development than in war production and hence he left his big war plant in Buffalo in competent production hands so he could undertake special developments on Long Island. One of these was the secret long-range airplane for bombing Germany. Although not completed before the Armistice, it later became famous as the XC Flying Boat. After the war, the Garden City plant continued to turn out new models, a series of Curtiss racers which won the Pulitzer prizes each year from 1922 to 1925, and a sturdy line of training airplanes.

Shortly after the end of the first World War, young Law

Continued on Page 138

## Forum

Continued From Page 136

The Sunrise Homeland, 1636-1950" has been published by The Long Island Association of Garden City. This "Island-wide Survey of Communities, Borough, County, Town and Village Information" will be found useful in homes as well as places of business. Every community in the island's four counties is listed with such information as population, location and more numerous facts as its size and background warrants. The pamphlet will be mailed to any address on receipt of 15 cents.

\* \* \*

### Those Seven Herons

That beautiful photo used in the May issue to illustrate Miss Overton's fine article on the Night Herons of Flushing was a work of photographic art. However, I could not find the "seven" birds; only four.

George Seury, New York.

Miss Overton, who mentioned the herons' effective camouflage, advises unbelievers to visit Flushing between autumn and early spring, and do their own counting.

—Editor

\* \* \*

Continued on Page 139

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## Island's Part in World Aviation

Continued from Page 137

rence Sperry left his father's gyroscope company and founded the Lawrence Sperry Aircraft Company, starting in an old factory in Farmingdale. Here he built one of the earliest amphibians. Then, in collaboration with Alfred Verville, he built the Sperry-Verville racing airplane in 1922. This low-wing monoplane was the first to have a retractable landing gear. It broke the world speed record in the Pulitzer race in that year only to be beaten a half hour later by another Long Island airplane, a Curtiss racer built at Garden City.

Then came the Sperry Messenger, a small general-utility airplane, which the Army adopted for message carrying. It was so easily handled that Sperry commuted regularly in it from his home in Garden City to his factory. He kept it in his garage, using a nearby vacant field for taking off and landing. Occasionally he even landed in the street. After Sperry's untimely death in 1923, when he was drowned in the English Channel, the company was dissolved and soon Sherman Fairchild took over the old factory. Fairchild's aircraft and engine activities grew rapidly and in 1927 he moved to a larger building of the Fulton Motor Truck Company just outside of Farmingdale. Fairchild manufactured airplanes and engines here until 1932. At this time he separated the air-

Continued on Page 139

### Grumman Aircraft Engineering Corp'n

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### Fashion Students From India

Valentina and Ludmila Primakoff have come from India to New York to specialize in design. Wife and daughter of a well-known Bombay architect, both are currently studying at the Traphagen School of Fashion. Mrs. Primakoff concentrating on clothing construction and Ludmila in the Art Department.

They combine their talents in producing beautiful clothes. Here Miss Primakoff models a dress she has created which was made by her mother. The button-on side panels of the sapphire blue crepe dress are removable and in that simple version a white pique collar may be added. With another quick change—an overskirt of nylon net (tupper photo), the dress goes out to cocktails or dinner. All three versions were demonstrated at a recent fall forecast show given by Traphagen.





## Island's Part in World Aviation

Continued from Page 138

plane and engine activities, moving the airplane division to Hagerstown, Maryland, and continuing the engine division at Farmingdale as the Ranger Aircraft Engine Division. During the war years the Ranger plant expanded greatly and produced many thousand air-cooled, in-line engines for training planes as well as a great variety of components for the airplane companies.

Another company which was caught up in the terrific demands of the war years was the Sperry Gyroscope Company of Brooklyn. For twenty-five years prior to Pearl Harbor the company had carried on in the instrument development field with an average of less than a thousand employees. Suddenly the demand for airplane instruments, bomb-sights, aircraft gun-sights and radar taxed the company so that it quickly outgrew its Brooklyn plant and five other leased factories in Brooklyn. By 1941 it was apparent that much more space was necessary. A site was chosen at Lake Success in Nassau County and in less than a year's time a huge modern plant of over two million square feet was constructed. Sixteen thousand employees were trained and put to work on the most advanced types of aircraft instruments and armament in the new plant. In all plants combined—Brooklyn, Lake Success, and an aircraft radar factory and laboratories in Garden City, Sperry employed a wartime peak of 32,000 persons.

To be continued

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## Forum

Continued from page 137

### Likes John Tooker's Stories

I want you to know how much I enjoyed the May Forum. Wish you could persuade Mr. Tooker to write more often. His articles are so filled with pleasant memories. I get a great thrill out of them.

I was also interested in the Blizzard article as "Jake Brown" was my uncle. I never knew he was in it. I spent much time at his home in Mattituck after my mother died as his wife was my father's oldest sister. You see, it was all very personal. And I did enjoy it.

(Mrs.) Eva Young Parson,

New York

\*\*\*

### Blizzard Story

Mr. Renville Silleck Smith's "Snowbound in Blizzard of '88" evokes shivers even in May. My mother was one of Mr. Horton's pupils in Brooklyn. Miss Marion F. Overton, Flushing.

\*\*\*

### Old Stony Brook Hotel

The cover picture of the May issue reminds me that I spent a night in the old Stony Brook Hotel some time in the autumn of 1895.

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# SPERRY

Great Neck

Long Island

I was one of a group of clerical and lay delegates to an Archdeaconry meeting at St. James and the delegates were sent to the hotel.

Also in my letter on Brooklyn railroads in that issue, I left out the first station south of Manhattan Beach Junction. It was called South Greenfield.

John Tooker, Babylon

\* \* \*

#### History of a Lodge

A history of Morton Lodge, No. 63, F. and A. M., of Hempstead by Toivo H. Nekton, published in 1949 and just brought to our attention, is of much broader scope and of much greater historical value than one would assume from the title. With such high regard for the early history of Hempstead as a whole did Author Nekton plan the work and with such care and precision fulfill the obli-

gations incurred, that the book easily assumes a place among the Island's leading chronicles.

It is, in fact, a work from which non-Masons as well as the author's brethren may add to their knowledge of Island and especially Hempstead town history. Not only does Mr. Nekton record the salient facts surrounding the formation of this oldest of the Island's surviving Masonic lodges but in the case of the founders of 1797 he covers each one's activities as a citizen and presents a thorough though necessarily brief biographical sketch in every case, as well as showing ancestral backgrounds.

It is interesting to learn that at the time of its erection, fourteen years after the close of the revolution, Morton became the second lodge on the island, the earlier one being at Huntington, which latter body has long since ceased

to exist. The founders of Morton Lodge were: David Richard Floyd Jones, Massapequa, first master; Jacob Seaman Jackson, Wantagh; Henry O. Seaman, Thomas Carman, Richard Beadle, William

Continued on Page 142

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Mr. Nekton, a prominent attorney of Hempstead, has with this history of a lodge made a useful contribution to the history of Nassau County and of the island as a whole.

#### Kate Strong's Stories

I have been reading Kate Strong's stories in the Forum ever since they began. What a tonishes me is not that she has such a fund of his original information, but that she never loses her interesting way of telling it.

Kate D. Cameron, Teacher.

#### The Roslyn Yawl

G. P. Rowe, Long Island City.

Howard I. Chapelle in his "American Sailing Craft," 1936, refers to Thomas Clapham, famous Roslyn yacht-builder during the 1880's and '90's, as creating a modified type of sharpie which was called the Nonpareil or Roslyn Sharpie, and "had a little deicide in the extreme bow and stern, the bottom retaining flat amidships." To quote Mr. Chapelle further, "Many of the Clapham sharpies were yawl-rigged and most of them were built for yachting purposes."

The name "sharpie" has long been applied to a certain type of yawlboat on Long Island, chiefly characterized by a straight bow, a flat or very slightly rounded bottom and a broad, straight stern. Although Thomas Clapham's racing yachts were undoubtedly developed from the New Haven Sharpie which was used on the Sound principally by oystermen, in racing circles it was designated as a yawl and became famous throughout this part of the country as the Roslyn Yawl. Some of these speedy racers were upwards of 40 feet in overall length, whereas the New Haven sailing sharpie, developed from the ordinary flat-bottom skiff, usually ran from 20 to 28 feet.

Another Long Island boatbuilder, Larry Huntington, became well known during the 1890's for a modified type of racing sharpie, which he gave a rounded bottom athwartships, retaining the flat sides and chines of the orthodox sharpie. According to Author Chapelle, Clapham's sharpie "evolved into the skipjack or V-bottom" and later into the racing "scow", which Huntington also had a hand in developing. For all of these sailing craft, declares Chapelle, "while the gaff rig was occasionally employed, the leg-of-mutton was the most common."

During the 1870's, an enthusiastic yachtsman named Ralph Middleton Munroe who lived on Staten Island, was a frequent visitor to the south side waters of Long Island and summered for several years on

Fire Island. His book, "The Commodore's Story," published many years later in 1930, describes a cruise to Florida on his yacht Egret, a double-ender schooner-rigged sharpie, and it was he who introduced sailing sharpies to Florida where he was one of the earliest winter sojourners in what has since become the city of Miami.

#### Southold's Commons

Until I read Dr. Wood's informative story in the June issue I never realized that the town of Southold had its "undivided commonage" for more than 200 years. The June issue as a whole was especially interesting.

(Mrs.) P. W. Jones, Rockaway.

#### Island's Part In Aviation

Mr. Bassett has done a fine thing in preparing the history of aviation on Long Island and you are to be congratulated on running it. I do hope it will be reprinted in a pamphlet.

Henry R. Armistead,  
Kew Gardens.

#### A Farmer Writes a Book

"These Hills Are Not Barren", the story of a Century Farm, by George D. Taylor, although not of Long Island, should have much appeal for Islanders as to all lovers of the soil. The well written volume is about the author's own farm at Stamford-in-the-Catskills which was founded by his great-grandfather in 1814, and about the five generations of this one family which have successfully operated it.

The Taylor Farm is a dairy

farm, but it is not just cows and milk and cream and butter. Its acres contain a large sugar "bush" and grow various fine crops, including in recent years much fine cauliflower. And it is of these things and of life generally on the farm, and of how succeeding generations of Taylors and other farmers of this fertile section have lived. That the author writes.

The book costs \$2.50 and may be obtained by addressing the author who, incidentally, is also president of the Stamford Board of Education.

#### Swezey's Who Moved Away

Here are some more early Long Islanders of the Swezey family who moved off the island to live and die elsewhere. The information was given me by Dr. Carroll Swezey of Batavia, N. Y.

Judge Samuel Swaze, born at Southold, L. I. March 20, 1689, moved his family to German Valley, N. J., in 1737. He settled Rox-

Continued on page 142

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Continued from page 141

bury, now Chester, which was first called Swayze Settlement. Died there May 11, 1759.

Barnabas Swayze moved from Southold in 1753 to Chester, N. J.

Stephen Swasey, born Brookhaven, L. I., in 1778, married 1803 a Smith of Stony Brook and settled in Broome County, N. Y.

Daniel Swesey, born Middle Island, L. I., June 30, 1753, married Sarah Beal. Helped settle Norway, Herkimer County, N. Y. where both died.

Another Daniel Swesey, born at Middle Island December 25, 1778, moved to Harmony, Chataqua County, N. Y. where he died November 22, 1847.

In reference to swans on Long Island, mentioned in a letter in the Forum, I recall seeing a pair on the mill pond near Smithtown some 50 years ago. I also recall my father telling me that he had seen swans there when he was a boy.

But although swans have now greatly increased on the island, the grand old oak trees which I once knew along the south shore, as far east as West Sayville seem to have disappeared except for a few sturdy, scattered specimens.

In the 1800's Long Island was the main source of fuel supply for New York City. Spafford in the Gazetteer of 1823 says that 100,000 cords of wood were sent annually to the city from Brookhaven town alone.

Of course the shipyards, of which Port Jefferson had five about 1800, used much of the island's timber, but the great reduction in trees came from the huge forest fires which followed the inception of the railroad. Many people wonder how the great Stony Brook Oak, still standing, survived the shipbuilders and the fires.

Mabel C. Tompkins,  
Chappaqua, N. Y.

We are glad to have the Forum coming to the Whitaker Collection each month and are hoping to complete the whole file. We have Miss Marguerite Doggett's Forum Index and it is very useful.

Also we are happy to have Bailey's History of Long Island—a recent gift.

Mrs. Joseph A. Wells, Southold.

May I take this opportunity to express my high regard for the Long Island Forum. It seems to me that you are doing a great service to local history in preserving so much of Long Island's past in such

Continued on back cover

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## Forum

Continued From Page 142

an attractive manner. I always find the articles stimulating and I must admit also that I enjoy and profit from the advertisements.

Oscar G. Darlington, Hempstead.  
Dr. Darlington, Professor of History and Chairman of the Department of History at Hofstra College, edits the Nassau County Historical Society Quarterly.—Editor.

Just finished reading Mrs. Valentine's "Among 'Leaves of Grass'" while getting together enough energy to get out and tackle the dandelion patch, and felt moved to write and say how thoroughly it was enjoyed.

Needless to say, being "rootless" on the Island, we find in the Forum those things which an immigrant to the "New World" must feel have been lost forever. Through the Forum, I for one don't feel such a stranger after all.

Geoff Teague, Amityville.

### Commonage Still Extant

I would like to record that the proprietors of the Southold common lands are still organized and, I believe, still hold annual sessions, although their holdings are greatly reduced. The late Stuart Horton of Cutchogue was chairman for many years. Some shareholders attend the annual meetings every April.

James R. Stead, Levittown.

We are delighted with your publication. My forebear, Jasper Griffing, landed in Southold in 1670 so I have a great interest in Long Island. Eugene Stanley Griffing, Bayside.

I take pride in saying I am one of your very earliest subscribers and have enjoyed your publication for many, many years and months. Newbold L. Herrick, Cedarhurst.

The articles of Miss Kate W. Strong have always been especially enjoyed by me. (Miss) Elizabeth Teed, East Orange, N. J.

I liked Mr. Tosker's article in the May Forum on Brooklyn railroads. John O'Halloran, Brooklyn.

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